databases and systems through cost-effective technology. It will decrease costs, automate permit and financial transactions, allow for one-stop shopping, improve information exchange, provide 24-hour access for citizens, streamline processes, and promote more community involvement. Internally, it could mean using project time data in Advantage to generate employee time sheets. It could also mean transferring data from the permit cashiering system to the county general ledger. The county is also working on moving the manual street addressing function into the GIS database.

An article in *Planning* ("E-Government: The Top 10 Technologies," September 2002), quoting IBM's Institute for Electronic Government, noted that processing a piece of paper costs a government $5 but that generating the same form electronically costs $1.65 because there are no labor, postage, paper, or equipment costs. The storage of planning documents is also changing. There is a better, cheaper alternative to filing lots of paper permits and plan sets.

Clark County now requires applicants to provide selected layers of site plans digitally. The plans are scanned and entered into the GIS. This reduces storage requirements and allows staff to access these documents electronically from their desks.

There are also savings if customers pay for permits online and not at a counter. The major drawback to electronic transactions is credit card companies that charge a transaction fee. Because the county is a government, we can't charge two sets of fees. Nor do credit card companies allow a surcharge. However, government can legally use an invisible third party vendor to collect the surcharge.

Involvement in government processes means using technology to raise public awareness. It is both promising and problematic. Using the Internet or e-News to let folks know how to contact their local neighborhood association and provide public notices of meetings or actions is something all citizens want. The use of e-News and websites is a cheap, but effective way to reach people about planning issues. Connecting the Advantage permitting system to the telephone-based voice recognition system allows the department to call permit applicants or contractors and inform them of impending code changes or permit expirations.

Some electronic communication is risky, including bulletin boards, listservs, and e-groups. In allowing for two-way communication, you have to worry about a few individuals who may abuse the privilege. The problem is not that people may disagree with a public policy, but that some individuals may express themselves in ways that are profane, racist, or sexist.

Industry perspective

CoolTown began four years ago, the brainchild of HP's new chairman and CEO, Carly Fiorina. "CoolTown helps us envision the possibilities for an environment where e-services are accessible everywhere," she said.

Start-up costs for CoolTown are under $1 million because the industry team uses existing equipment and staff. However, the intellectual capital involved is unmeasurable. "When you think about connectivity, anything becomes possible; the only limitation is your imagination," says Dick Lampman, director of HP Labs.

> ## A healthy and successful organization or community has a human culture and a soul.

According to HP, Vancouver is the poster child for i-government. The CoolTown system will be replicated nationwide.

A cultural change

Rich Carson, the director of the county's Community Development Department, is part of the HP development team. He and program manager Marlia Jenkins are directing the technological change in the county's planning functions. Jenkins notes that "professional planners have traditionally been pretty low tech. We have relied on the print media for brochures, newsletters, and magazines. However, with i-government our innovations are limited only by our imagination and money."

The introduction of the personal computer in 1981 and the commercialization of the Internet in 1995 have had profound implications for the planning profession. The Internet has allowed planners and planning organizations to provide information through a whole new medium.

This means planners are getting much more efficient with their time and their communications. Instead of moving a request for a decision from office to office on a paper memo, it's possible to make simultaneous decisions.

But is all this new electronic efficiency a good thing? There are three areas of concern:

First, by increasing electronic communication, we may be reducing the daily social interaction planners have with each other and with community residents. Planners manage programs, people, or budgets, but can be lulled into avoiding face-to-face contact with people. Let's face it, one of the hardest parts of being a planner can be dealing with unhappy people. In contrast, the computer screen expresses no emotion.

Planners can overcome social isolation in two ways. They can have an open-door policy, and they can use any pretense to walk around and talk to people. A healthy and successful organization or community has a human culture and a soul. Planners need to embrace these both attitudes emotionally and sometimes physically.

A second problem with electronic communication is that things get overly complicated. Computer models and GIS can let us do very sophisticated analyses. However, they can also become "black boxes" full of erroneous assumptions no one understands.

Finally, not everyone is comfortable with technology. This isn't a generational issue. Some people just don't relate to computers and the Internet. So we still need to find ways for such people to access the planning process.

One fact is quite clear. No matter what the future of the CoolTown partnership, Clark County has made a commitment to embrace new technologies and integrate them for the public's benefit. That means better public access to government and a more cost-efficient government.

Richard Carson is the director of Clark County's Community Development Department in Vancouver, Washington. He is also a volunteer editor of LookSmart's Urban Issues categories. LookSmart is the largest Internet directory in the world, with 2.3 million listed websites.

Resources

On the web. Learn more about Hewlett-Parkard's "CoolTown" project and see streaming videos about it at http://cooltown.hp.com/ Clark County's Community Development Department website is at www.clark.wa.gov/ ComDev/Default.asp. Intel's "Most Unwired City" reportlist is at www.intel.com/products/mobiletechnology/unwiredcities.htm. Clark County's Maps On Line site can be found at www.co.clark.wa.us.

Contacts. Marlia Jenkins, Clark County Community Development Department, 360-397-2375, ext. 4405, or marlia.jenkins@clark.wa.gov.
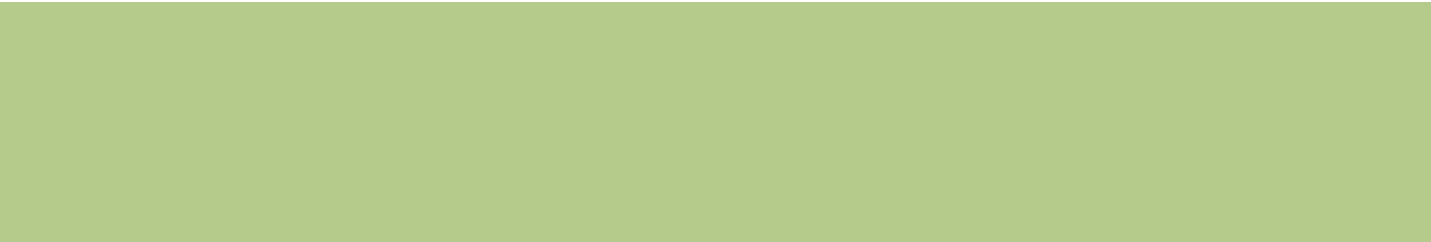
Express Permitting

Easier, Faster, More Efficient Development Processing Helps Create Jobs in Clark County

Richard Carson
Clark County
Department of Community Development
1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, Washington 98660

July 2003

Jobs Creation Is Important To A Healthy Local Economy

Over the last 20 years, Clark County has been one of the fastest growth counties in the State of Washington and the nation. However, this growth made the County even more of a bedroom community to Portland, Oregon.

As the county enters the 21st century, it becomes increasingly obvious that job creation is important to diversifying and stabilizing the local economy. Jobs are important to citizens as a way to create personal income. Commercial and industrial development and the resulting jobs are also important to local governments as a way to stabilize and increase local tax bases and decrease the transportation burden of long distance commuting to other communities.

Community Development Permitting Can Assist Job Creation

The Department's **Express Permitting** program proposes three approaches to assist in job creation:
1. Improve regulations to make it faster and more efficient to establish, relocate, retain and expand businesses;
2. Expedite permitting for major investment projects to encourage investment by existing major employers and aid recruitment of new major investors;
3. Expand E-services and E-commerce to make it easier to access services at any time and from any location.

The Department plans to streamline systems and reduce barriers while continuing to make sure businesses are compliant with the health and safety standards already deemed important to the community. The result will be a smarter, easier, faster and more efficient permitting system that helps the job creation efforts of recruitment agencies, business associations and individual businesses.
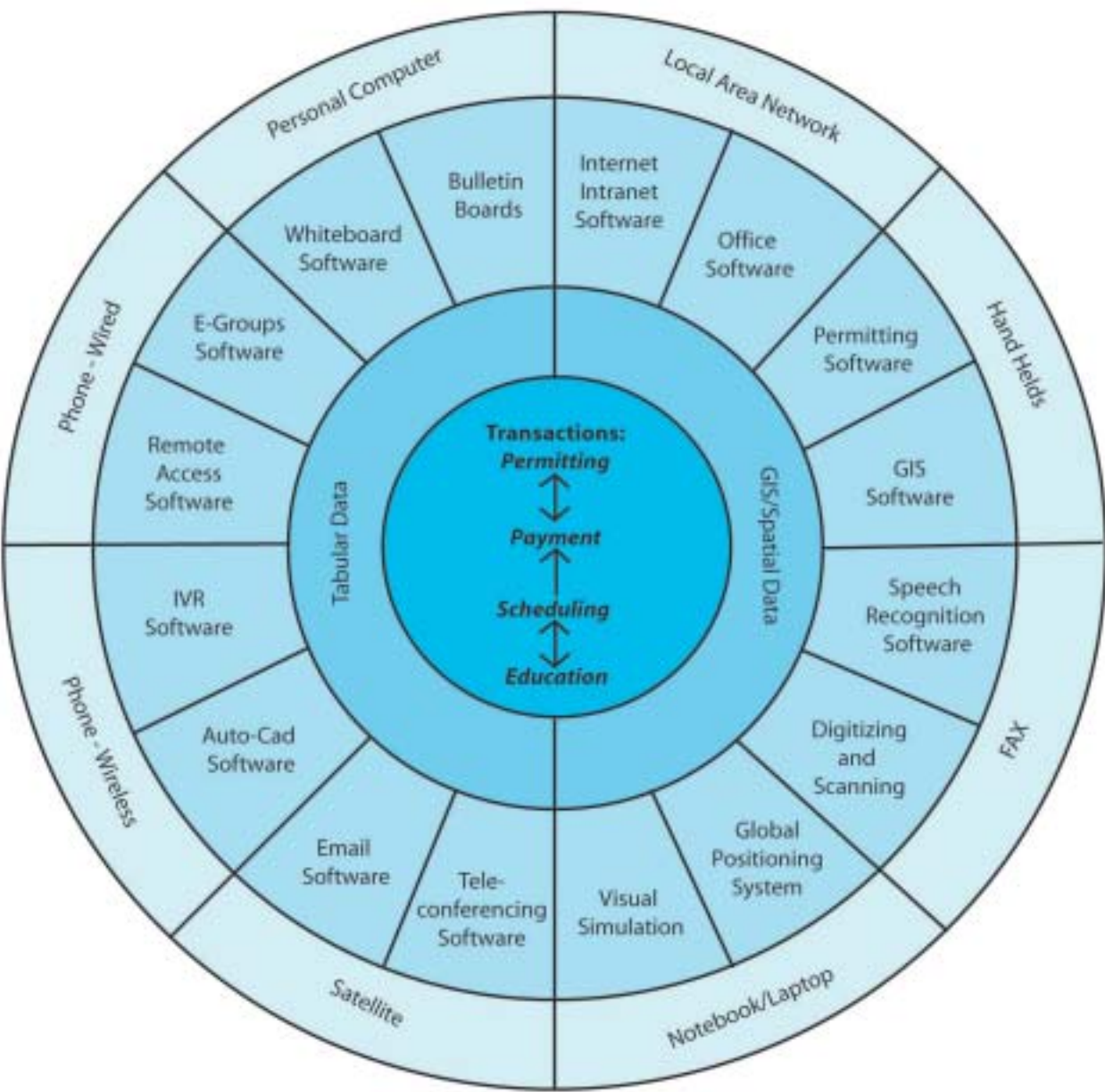
"E-Ring" depicts an ideal system: a totally fluid way to create any desired transaction.

plan was last adopted.

We have used technology like e-News, updated websites, website surveys, electronic voting in workshops, computerized vacant land, and transportation models to help inform citizens about the plan's alternatives. The county also put the comprehensive plan's environmental impact statement on a CD-ROM and will produce a cable television show about the preferred alternative.

Economic development is a high priority for the county and it is stressing the need to electronically streamline its permitting system. The Express Permitting program goal is to process permits within 60 to 90 days and to achieve the highest level of electronic integration between staff and customers. As an added incentive, applicants may now submit and pay for land-use and building permits electronically, anytime of the day or night from any location.

Education affords a lot of opportunities because it is almost limitless. The county website currently offers its GIS maps, development code, comprehensive plan, news articles, development trends, reports and studies, and meeting and event dates. The Community Development Department also uses a monthly e-News to reach out to its citizens. A traditional printed quarterly report has been replaced by a web-based data library allowing users to select and print the data they want.

Clark County recently built a six-story Public Service Center that is essentially a "smart building" constructed with education and information in mind. The building has LCD projectors, remote controlled cameras, and electronic whiteboards. It is also wired for long-distance learning, live cable broadcasts, and video conferencing.

Integration of government means linking

to look for more cost-efficient options.

Clark County has been the fastest growing county in both the state of Washington and the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area since 1990. From 1990 to 2002, the county grew by nearly five per cent a year, from 238,053 to 363,400 people. Both Washington State and neighboring Oregon have adopted state-mandated land-use planning. Because of Washington's 1990 Growth Management Act, Clark County and the city of Vancouver, Washington, have successfully used comprehensive plans, environmental impact statements, transportation concurrency, and urban growth boundaries to manage growth.

Listening to the community
In planning for CoolTown, Hewlett-Packard's first step was to hold a series of workshops with community leaders. HP understands the development and marketing of high-technology products, but it knew it didn't understand the needs of government or the interaction between government and its citizens. So in late 2002, the company conducted three workshops, identified 120 possible application areas, and asked participants to rank these areas by their degree of importance.

The highest ranked categories included:
- Access to government services
- Community interaction
- Current community projects
- Economic development
- Education
- Integration of government
- Involvement in government processes

Some of these focus areas are easier than others to implement or manage.

Access to government services may provide the biggest return on investment. The Clark County Community Development Department's "virtual permit center" is a good example. The rationale behind it is that if a customer can go online, instead of stand in line, then the department can reduce staffing or spend more time working with those customers who come into the permit center.

The primary electronic links are between the county's computer system, the Internet website, Advantage's permitting system, and GIS. At the moment, the Advantage link is available solely to staff through an Intranet. However, the link is expected to be made available to the public so that individuals can track the status of an application. The GIS setup is especially useful because it allows people to click on a property and learn everything they want to know about that property's zoning, environmental issues, legal surveys or plat maps, and tax assessments.

The county has other peripheral electronic tools as well. It uses a speech-recognition software that allows fire marshals to dictate their inspection reports right into the computer system. In a matter of hours, the software learns each individual's speech patterns and then spells the information accurately 95 percent of the time. This system saves real dollars because it eliminates the need for administrative staff to enter report information into the computer system.

The building inspectors use a slightly different interactive voice recognition system, allowing them to call in and leave voice recordings. This two-way system lets the applicants know the status of their building permits and when building inspections are scheduled.

Public access to technology works well because the county has a high degree of "connectivity." The county is currently revamping its website with a new architecture that will allow greater navigation and format consistency. The Internet access is a great communication tool, but unfortunately, not everyone has a personal computer at home or at work. Some electronic alternatives are library computers, kiosks, and even ATMs. The bottom line is that government can't rely solely on electronic communication and must maintain the more traditional communication tools, such as print publications.

Community interaction is about how technology brings people together–including those working on development review and long-range planning. Electronic integration and unexpected events like 9-11 and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) are radically changing how we work together.

Why fly some place to have a meeting? Virtual meetings can be held over the Internet, and they're cheaper and safer. For example, the new white board technology allows a private sector engineer in one city to see the redlines on plans being done by a public sector engineer in another city.

Internet conferencing also allows the participants to see PowerPoint, spreadsheets, and visual simulations, and to hear all the participants. The great improvement in the quality of virtual meetings is key to replacing the real meeting.

Current community projects refers to a variety of planning efforts. The major one has been the county's comprehensive plan update. Electronic technology has played a much more prominent role in creating today's plan than it did in 1994, when the comprehensive

1

Improve regulations to make it faster and more efficient to establish, relocate, retain and expand businesses.

The Express Permitting Program improves permit processing for development activities large and small. It takes a common sense approach, attempting to streamline, clarify, and reduce regulation. It assists businesses that relocate from one structure to another, secure their first space in an existing structure, or expand and lease additional space. In some cases, forms of public involvement change to provide opportunities for earlier and more effective involvement. Other elements of the Express Permit Program will improve permit processing through improved management in the department.

Specifically, the Department proposes:

1. **Increase use of administrative review of Type 3 planning projects.** Granting the planning director the authority to approve some kinds of Type 3 planning projects (including site plans and conditional use permits) using administrative authority will reduce the time necessary for approval. Currently, all these projects require a public hearing, which increases the time for processing.

2. **Waive or reduce fees for pre-applications.** In conjunction with waiving pre-applications, a reduced fee, or perhaps even a free pre-application could give applicants a real incentive to use the pre-application process when it is a benefit to their project.

3. **Institute neighborhood association pre-meetings.** This step will be enacted in conjunction with the administrative review of Type 3 applications and will also apply to Type 2 applications. To provide adequate public comments and feedback, developers will be required to meet with neighborhoods before application and to submit documentation of the meeting. The meetings will involve, inform and identify the interests of neighborhoods. A similar process is already in place for wireless communications and infill projects. Neighborhood associations will be informed of pre-application meetings, but will not be participants in those meetings. This will allow the applicants to discuss proprietary issues.

4. **Simplify similar use requirements. Streamline tenant improvement plan reviews.** One of the most substantial difficulties faced by both the county and the small business tenant is the county's process for evaluating tenant improvements and similar uses. The process involves the planning, building and fire divisions. Many of the requirements create disincentives to comply with the law. As a result, illegal uses proliferate, and most seriously, unsafe buildings result from improper space design as uses change. The county will streamline both the planning and building regulations for tenant improvements and create procedures that encourage compliance.

the ultimate technological future of complete electronic integration.   By Richard H. Carson

5. **Create building and development inspector teams specializing in industrial and commercial inspections.** Currently, building inspectors are assigned to geographic areas and handle all inspections in their areas, regardless of workload or special expertise. The department will assign a team of building and development inspectors who specialize in commercial or industrial project.

6. **Institute meetings between building plan reviewers and applicants after first building plan review.** In 2001, engineering plan reviewers started offering applicants a face-to-face meeting to review redlined drawings after the first plan review. This meeting substantially improved cycle times and communications. The Building Division will start a similar process for tenant improvement reviews and expects a similar result.

7. **Improve final plat and final site plan processes.** The final plat and final site plan processes are important to applicants because, at the end of the process, every day of delay can increase financial burden. The county will review these processes, streamline, coordinate and have improved processes available. Both residential and commerical\industrial projects will benefit.

8. **Increase use of over- the- counter permits.** Increasing the number of permits available over the counter will improve customer service. With one visit, customers can apply and leave with a completed permit. Increasing the number of permits over the counter requires greater skill among counter staff and customer acceptance of conditions.

9. **Reduce fees for selected over-the-counter permits.** With improved processing it will be possible to reduce fees for some transactions that require minimal staff time. It may be possible to offer some services without charge.

10. **Create umbrella SEPA reviews for specific project types and conditions and allow individual properties of the specific project type to use this SEPA review subject to meeting all other environmental regulations.** This will result in cost savings for some projects because the additional cost and review time of a SEPA is not required.

11. **Allow the use of escrows for small private improvement projects.** Expanding use of escrows for private improvements for small projects like infill or short plats could reduce the out of pocket, start up costs for applicants.

touch screen console; and next generation microfiche reader where images can be accessed, scanned, and sent elsewhere.

What if technology allowed computer databases, held devices, and geographic information systems technological solution included government?

nology leadership already in place, make an ideal environment from HP's perspective for such a partnership." Medlin points out, though, that CoolTown is a concept, not a place.

What's special
Besides being technologically advanced, the city and county share the same computer system and permitting system (Advantage by Accella). Hewlett-Packard is located in the Vancouver area, and Microsoft is in Redmond, Washington, a suburb of Seattle. And because

the Portland-Vancouver metro area is home to some of the largest American and Japanese high-tech companies, its residents are used to a high level of computer services and are technologically literate.

In a recent Intel report, called the "Most Unwired City," the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area was singled out for having more WiFi hotspots than any other place in the nation. WiFi (or wireless fidelity) allows a laptop or handheld device (PDA) equipped with an ethernet compatible card to get access

to the Internet. (See "Wanna Be Wireless?" September 2002.) The WiFi technology is a key component to the success of the CoolTown initiative. It means that citizens and government officials can carry around portable notebook computers and access information 24 hours a day from most urban locations.

Even before CoolTown began in 1999, the county began using technology in new ways to communicate with its citizens. The county found that residents expected to use new technology, but budget constraints forced the county

3

Connected at L

Woman talking on a wireless phone; a handheld or personal digital assistant device (PDA) in a restaurant; multimedia

Think about everything electronic you touch. television, wired and wireless phones, hand to be completely "connected"? What if that

Up to now the buzz words *e-government* and *i-government* have referred to electronic processes, but those processes haven't been integrated. Governments are using a patch-work of elec- tronic equipment and software that aren't linked or compatible. That means staff mem- bers can't reach everything they need from their desktop computers, and citizens can't access everything they want over the Internet.

This situation is changing. A unique high-tech industry coalition—with such members as Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, Cisco Sys-tems, and AT&T—has joined forces with two local governments to reach the next tech-nological level. This beta-test project, called *CoolTown*, is located in southwest Washing-ton State, in the heart of the Pacific North-west. Clark County and its largest city, Vancouver, Washington—part of the Port-land, Oregon, metropolitan area—were picked for the development team because each was deemed an "intelligent community" and a "leading technology adapter" by the industry team.

According to Tim Medlin, Western Re-gion business solutions manager for Hewlett-Packard, "The unique characteristics of the city-county relationship, as well as the tech-

12. **Offer a money back guarantee for timely processing of selected specific applica-tions**. The Department will set standards for timely processing and offer a money back guarantee if certain projects are not reviewed within the published timeli-ness standard.

13. **Adjust impact fees for project value, project impact or other criteria.** The Depart-ment will advocate for impact fees that take the value of the project, project impact or other criteria into account. The goal is to link, even more closely than today, the fee to the cost incurred or benefit received. This will require rigorous analysis and a cooperative effort with the Public Works Department, Park Depart-ment and the local school districts. The adjustment may increase or decrease impact fees depending on the type of project.

14. **Privatize (outsource) when improved review and benefits to the applicant and the county will result.** Outsourcing is underway in the Engineering Division for inspection of landscape installation and for peak periods of construction plan review. The Department will outsource other activities when there are no life\safety issues and future infrastructure maintenance is addressed.

15. **Provide enhanced and expanded information at the Customer Service Counter.** Hiring and training staff with a broad planning, engineering and building knowledge to work at the Customer Service Counter will increase the ability to answer difficult questions and to provide reliable, consistent information. Enhanced service will provide the opportunity to educate appli-cants, provide useful tips that lead to successful applications, and make applicants more aware of their role in a successful process.

16. **Emphasize problem solving in enforcement actions**. The Department will begin to prioritize enforcement actions and pursue those that have the potential to provide the greatest public safety or environmental protection benefit. The Department will help solve priority problems by bringing regula-tory, enforcement, education, and community resources together. The benefit to business is a higher quality of life in the community.

17. **Amend codes on a regular basis**. Code changes to clarify language, respond to changing interpretation, and respond to unforeseen circumstances are necessary. When code changes don't occur, the code is hard to administer. Decisions that lack common sense often result. The Department will initiate housekeeping and interpretative code changes twice per year. The year end 2003 code changes include a reorganization of the planning, procedure and environmental codes to create a unified, uniform code (Title 40).

18. **Integrate environmental health development permitting activities (such as septic systems and wells) in to the department.** This will result in one-stop shopping for customers.

19. **Improve customer flow in the Customer Service Center.** The department will install a computer based system that calls customers to the counter for services based on the type of service requested. The department will also expand the opportunity for builders to schedule appointments. As a result, wait time for customers will decrease and efficient use of staff resources will increase.

Proposed Calendar

Task	Design and Adoption	Implementation
1. Increase use of administrative review of Type 3 planning projects.	8/03 to 2/04	2/04
2. Reduce fees for pre-applications.	8/03 to 2/04	2/04
3. Institute neighborhood association pre-meetings.	8/03 to 2/04	2/04
4. Simplify similar use requirements. Streamline tenant improvement plan reviews.	4/03 to 2/04 Research underway	3/04
5. Create Building and Development Inspector Teams specializing in commercial inspections.	4/03	5/03
6. Institute meetings between building plan reviewers and applicants after first building plan review.	6/03	7/03
7. Improve final plat and final site plan processes.	10/02 to 6/03 Research complete	7/03
8. Increase use over the counter permits.	5/04/ to 10/04	12/04
9. Reduce fees for over the counter permits.	7/04 to 12/04	1/05
10. Create umbrella SEPA reviews.	1/04/ to 6/04	7/04
11. Allow use of escrows for small projects.	1/04/ to 6/04	7/04
12. Offer a money back guarantee.	7/04 to 12/04	1/05
13. Adjust impact fees for project values.	5/04 to 5/05	12/05
14. Privatize when benefits are clear.	1/04/ to 6/04	7/04
15. Provide complete information at Customer Service Counter.	Thru period	Thru period
16. Emphasize problem solving for enforcement	1/04/ to 6/04	7/04
17. Amend codes on a regular basis.	1-3 and 9-11 of each year	6 and 12 of each year
18. Integrate environmental health.	6/03 to 12/03	12/03
19. Improve customer flow in the Customer Service Center.	1/03 to 6/03	7/03 Pilot underway

Participants in Program Development

The Express Permit program will require the cooperation and feedback of many interest groups. In both the development and implementation of the program, the Department will involve the following parties in a series of focus groups and one-on-one conversations. When code changes are required, the appropriate public process including public hearings will be followed.

Clark County Board of Commissioners
Provide policy direction and guidance, enact code changes, and allocate fiscal resources.
Judie Stanton
Betty Sue Morris
Craig Pridemore

Core County staff
Program development, research, and draft process and code changes, ensure stakeholder involvement, involve other staff for specific areas of expertise and feedback.
Bill Barron, County Administrator
Rich Carson, DCD
Rich Lowry, PA
Mike Butts, DCD
Maureen Knutson, DCD
Lou Adams, DCD
Shari Jensen, DCD
Marlia Jenkins, DCD
David Lynam, DCD
Pat Lee, DCD
Kelly Sills, CCBOC
Mary Keltz, CCBOC
Lianne Forney, PIO

Core Partners
Conceptualize program needs, program elements, and public\private linkages.
Bart Phillips, CREDC
John McKibben, Chambers of Commerce
Matt Lewis, BIASW
Jessica Hoffman, Clark County Realtors Association

Expanded Partners
Review and comment on proposals, feedback on specific issues of concern.
Cities via the GMA Steering Committee
Responsible Growth Forum
Identity Clark County
Friends of Clark County
Neighborhood Alliance (NACC)
Ports
Special Districts
Clark Public Utilities
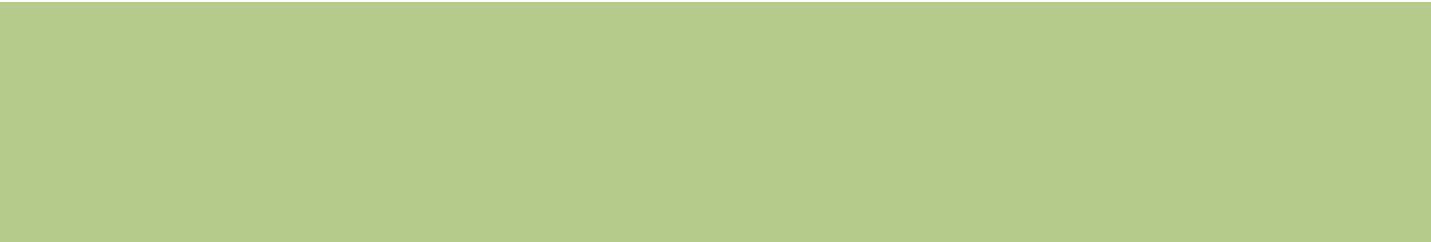
and will ensure that documents are filed and easily located.

8. **Participate in Hewlett Packard "I-Government" initiative.** The county is a partner with the city of Vancouver in a Hewlett Packard initiative that will link computers, internet, cell phones, IVR and GIS technologies to local governments. AT&T and Microsoft are also partners in creating this cutting edge high tech government platform.

Proposed Calendar

Task	Design	Implementation
1. Accept electronic payments.	6/03 to 12/03 Research underway	1/04
2. Allow "view only" access into Advantage.	6/03 to 9/03 Research underway	10/03
3. Expand IVR to include web features.	1/04 to 6/04	7/04
4. Accept building permits over the web.	1/04 to 12/04	1/05
5. Accept planning applications, site plans, and building plan reviews over the web.	1/05 to 12/05	1/06
6. Improve field technology.	1/05 to 12/05	Thru period
7. Develop a document imaging system.	1/05 to 12/05	Thru period
8. Participate in Hewlett Packard "I Government" initiative.	6/03 to 12/04	Thru period

2 Expedite permitting for major investment projects to encourage investment by existing major employers and aid recruitment of new major investors

While small business is the backbone of job creation in the community, major investments provide the opportunity for substantial diversification, job creation, and economic progress. The Express Permit program supports major economic investment for employers bringing new family wage jobs or expanding their current employment or investment bases. Improved permit processing makes it easier to recruit new investment and gives existing employers the incentive to stay in the community and continue their investment.

Specifically, the Department proposes:

(a) Implement a 60- to 90-day review process for major investment projects; and
(b) Offer case management to major investment projects.

Implement a 60- to 90-day review process for major investment projects. The major investments program is based on speed, flexibility and commitment. The county defines a "major investment" in terms of investment in a building. Investment in new buildings must be at least $2,000,000 and investments in tenant improvements or remodels must be at least $500,000. The Columbia River Economic Development Commission certifies that the project is important for job creation in the county. Projects are eligible for a 50-Day land use approval process and/or a 50-Day engineering and building plan approval process. The processes can be overlapped to provide approval in 60 to 90 days. Eligible projects meet a defined set of characteristics that can be generally described as projects without environmental or transportation constraints and projects that do not required hearing examiner review. The exceptional speed is achieved because both the project team and the county commit to the approval in an accelerated time frame. The flexibility allows a project to use the 50-Day processes for engineering or planning, or both, depending on the complexity of the issues at the site.

The county will work with private land owners to "prequalify "sites and make them permit ready for development. Pre–qualification involves a thorough site investigation to identify all transportation, environmental and other concerns. The mitigation, terms and conditions for development are identified. When a business comes to the community that meets the criteria for a major investment, chooses a prequalified site, and can meet the conditions for permitting on the site, the project is offered a permitting process through engineering and building plan review in 60- to 90-days.

While new to Clark County, this kind of pre–qualification process has been successfully implemented in other Washington communities and across the nation. Its success is based on a realistic assessment of the capacities of the site, a rigorous definition of "major investment" and the cooperation of both the public and private sector.
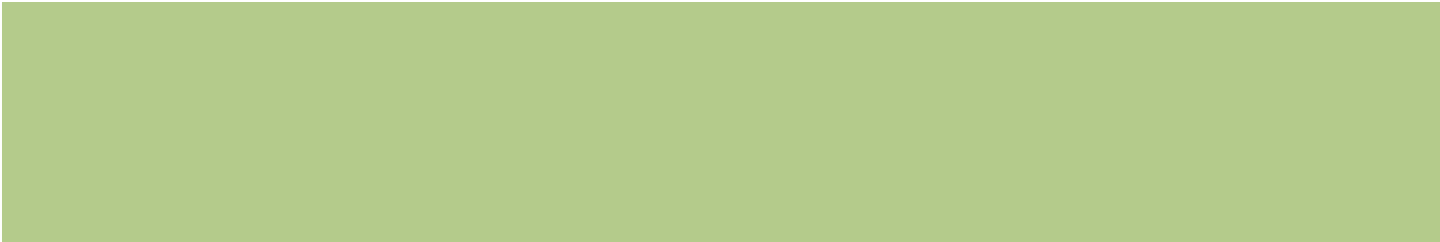
The same approach can be taken for sites within larger geographic areas that have sub-area planning and planned action ordinances.

Offer case management to major investment projects. In case management, the county assigns one person, as a team leader, to one project and makes them accountable for coordinating Clark County activities for the project. The case management team has flexibility in assuring that county codes and standards are met. The team may shift time frames for approval or conditions to keep the project on schedule. The final product is the key. The final product must meet the substantive requirements of the Clark County Code before occupancy.

In large, complex projects, responsiveness and communication can be the key to success and dedicating staff to the effort is essential. The applicants and the Department will identify the skills and expertise necessary to ensure that planning, engineering, inspection, and building resources are coordinated. In some cases, the county team leader may be a private sector employee working under contract with the county. Case management is voluntary. The projects reimburse the county for expenses. Costs are negotiated on a project by project basis based on department staffing that is above and beyond the standard permit processing. Costs range between $50,000 and $125,000 per year depending on the project's complexity. While expensive, experience with the Clark County Amphitheater and Legacy Hospital shows that investors find a great benefit in having a dedicated point of contact within the county and inspectors available whenever they are needed.

Over time, as familiarity and experience with the concept increases, the Department plans to make case management available for a broader range of project types.

Proposed Calendar

Task	Design and Adoption	Implementation
1. Preplanned nodes: public investment in planning and assuring availability of infrastructure.**	2/03 to 11/03 1/04 to 11/04	12/04
2. Pre-qualified sites: public private cooperation in regulatory preparation of sites.	2/03 to 11/03 1/04 to 11/04	12/04
3. 60 to 90-day permit process.	2/03 to 11/03	12/03 8/03 Pilot underway
4. Case manager to guide permitting process.	2/03	Available
5. Development agreements to assist process.	2/02 to 11/03	12/03
6. Building and Development Inspector Team dedicated to projects.	11/03	When needed

** The timeline shows the time needed to create a process for preplanning. The preplanning of individual nodes will take additional time, probably 18 months per node.

3
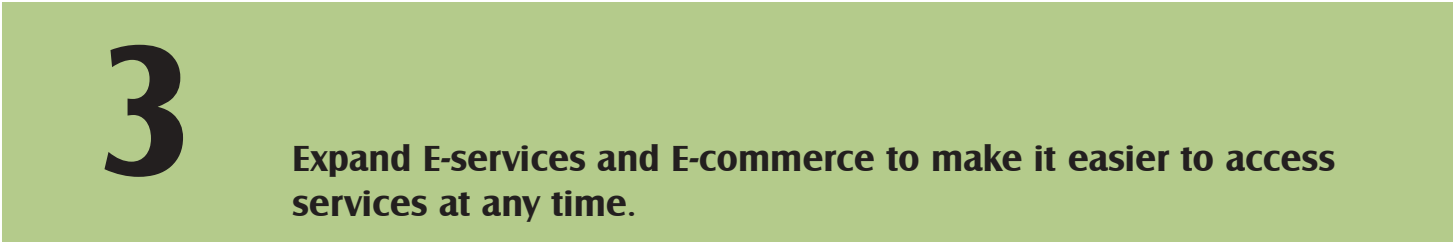
Expand E-services and E-commerce to make it easier to access services at any time.

The third approach in Express Permit program proposes using technology to assist job creation. Technology provides the opportunity to improve access to the Department and its permit processes. The internet will give customers the opportunity to submit applications when it is most convenient for them. E-services will be available starting in 2003. Telephone technology through an interactive voice recognition system (IVR) will allow faster and more reliable requests for building inspections starting in 2003.

Technology will also improve the accuracy and speed of field inspections. In addition to the IVR for building, the Department will invest in remote computers and other technologies that will allow inspectors to communicate with the office permit processing system and to reduce duplication of effort. Information will be entered into the system more quickly and will be available to applicants more quickly.

Specifically the Department proposes:

1. **Accept electronic payments.** First at the counter, and later via the web, e-commerce will allow the department to accept credit cards, debit cards and checks.

2. **Allow "view only" access into Advantage.** Customers will be allowed to view the status of their projects over the web. This will improve communication and make it possible for customer to know, at any time, their status.

3. **Expand IVR to include web features.** The Department will install a telephone IVR in 2003. The system will be expanded to the web, allowing customers to request building inspections using the web.

4. **Accept building permits over the web.** The first step in E-Service will be acceptance of building permits over the web.

5. **Accept planning applications, site plans, and building plan reviews over the web.** The Department will expand E-services to include the most complex submissions.

6. **Improve field technology.** The Department will invest in technology for field inspectors to improve their efficiency and accuracy in the field. This may include speech recognition systems, hand held units or laptops.

7. **Develop a document imaging system.** Document imaging will make it easier for the Department to receive and send documents electronically